

Quick Summary: This section provides an introduction to the Town of Hertford Pedestrian Plan. It describes some of the benefits of a more walkable community, the Plan's outline, and some of its goals.



Figure 1-1. The Visitor's Bureau and Chamber of Commerce in Hertford welcomes visitors and residents alike.

Section 1. Introduction and Goals

1.1. Introduction

Located in eastern North Carolina, the Town of Hertford is a small town with big potential. From the scenic Perquimans River to its quaint downtown, Hertford has become an attractive and exciting venue for people to visit. In recent years, the Town has also experienced increased popularity as a place to live and subsequent new growth in population. In order to continue this trend, recent town efforts such as the *Hertford Development Strategic Plan* and *Hertford Corridor Plan Phase 1: US 17* have focused on enhancing the town's appearance to make it more inviting for visitors and residents. At the same time, new efforts have been made to improve the Town's infrastructure, including sidewalk construction along Church Street to NC 17 and the construction of the new Perquimans County Recreation Center. The Hertford Pedestrian Plan was created in this atmosphere of new growth and renewed infrastructure. Combining the movements to enhance the Town's attractiveness to visitors and new residents with improvements to the community's infrastructure and existing facilities, the Hertford Pedestrian Plan serves as a guiding document to improve the walkability of the Town through specific projects to make the Town more attractive, comfortable, and safer for pedestrians.

The Hertford Pedestrian Plan is funded by a grant from the North Carolina Department of Transportation's Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Division (NCDOT DBPT) and matching funds from the Town of Hertford. More than just a project list, the Plan is a tool to create a more pedestrian-friendly atmosphere through recommended programs, policies, projects, and plans. The Plan also provides a description of priorities, partnerships, cost estimates, and funding sources to help the town implement its recommendations.

In addition to improving the walkability of the Town, the Pedestrian Plan has several other benefits. First, the Pedestrian Plan will help guide future spending for projects in order to construct a connected pedestrian system in a logical fashion. Second, improved pedestrian facilities will also make it easier, cheaper, and safer for people to move around town – residents and visitors alike. Third, better walking conditions promote more walking, which has several benefits including reduced traffic congestion, improved health and more active lifestyles for local residents, and reduced air pollution. A more walkable town is also frequently more attractive to visitors and new businesses, which in turn can help boost the local economy. As can be seen, although the Pedestrian Plan is specifically focused on improving walking, it has many peripheral benefits which can help improve health, the environment, and the local economy.

1.2. Planning Process

The Hertford Pedestrian Plan was begun in February 2007 and completed in December 2007 (estimated no later than). During this time, the Town hired The Louis Berger Group, Inc. to assist with plan preparation and public involvement. The plan preparation process was guided by a standing stakeholder committee comprised of members who represented a variety of interests in the Town, including the health community, town staff and public works, the school system, and the town's Greenway/Blueway Advocacy group. The Stakeholder Committee members were:

- ◆ Juanita J. Bailey, Cooperative Extension
- ◆ Dick Calogero, Historic Hertford, Inc.
- ◆ John Christensen, Town of Hertford
- ◆ JoAnn Morris, Commissioner, Town of Hertford
- ◆ Linda O'Connell, Perquimans Trailblazers
- ◆ Brandon Shoaf, Town of Hertford
- ◆ Dwayne Stallings, Perquimans County Schools
- ◆ Sue Weimar, County Commissioner
- ◆ Chris Wharton, Town of Hertford

There were a total of four stakeholder meetings. In addition to the stakeholders, the Plan also was guided by public input as a result of a public involvement process. This process included a survey, conducted from March 2007 to May 2007, two public meetings (one as part of a stakeholder committee meeting and a second as part of the Hertford Grammar School Open House), and a presentation to Town Council. For more flyers and information describing the stakeholder meetings, public meetings, and Town Council presentation, please see Appendix 1.

1.3. Goals

The goals of the Hertford Pedestrian Plan were a result of a visioning exercise that the stakeholder committee participated in to identify the top priorities that they would like to see in the Plan. The results were as follows:

1. **Improved pedestrian access** to schools through more pedestrian connections and a stronger sense of safety in the area. More pedestrian connections may include providing a pedestrian connection between the High School and Elementary school, and improving connections to the school from residential areas both in town and outside of town, and also to Hertford's downtown.
2. **Improved health of the community** through programs and projects that may promote walking and more physical activity. Programs may include encouragement at



Figure 1-2. Woodard's Pharmacy is a Hertford hallmark, and its distinctive sign contributes to the sense of community in the Town.

- schools (such as a Safe Routes to School program), work places, and recreation facilities. Projects may include greenway facilities and/or an exercise/jogging path.
3. **Capital improvements** which will boost walking and pedestrian safety. Capital improvements may include creating trails that are interesting, attractive, and fun to walk; continuing beautification efforts and improved landscaping; and providing more green areas for rest and relaxation.
 4. **Better connectivity** in town to connect residential areas, downtown, businesses, and the recreation center to the south of downtown. Better connectivity is both a result of projects that make walking from one place to another easier but that also improve the experience of walking. Projects that will better connect destinations in the Town may include providing a pedestrian-way from downtown to the recreation center, and a pedestrian-way between the two schools in town. Other projects should focus on improving a pedestrian's sense of security in town and providing more ADA-accessible facilities.
 5. **Increased sense of community** measured by more pedestrian traffic downtown, increased use of downtown stores, and more visitors to the town. In addition, the Pedestrian Plan should be the result of a full community involvement effort which incorporates a variety of viewpoints. Efforts to increase the sense of community should also result in children and residents having a higher regard for their community and downtown in particular.

1.4. Summary

The following chapters contain information and recommendations developed to help guide the Town towards meeting its goals for the Pedestrian Plan. In Chapters 2 and 3, the Plan provides information on existing conditions – including demographics and facilities and existing plans. This information serves as the basis for the project, program, and policy recommendations which are discussed in Chapters 4, 6, and 7. Chapter 5 provides recommended best practices for design guidelines and standards for facility design and construction, and Chapter 8 includes recommended scheduling, funding sources, and implementation approaches.